GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4444
ANSWERED ON:24.04.2008
SUB STANDARD FOOD
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Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways are aware that low quality food is being served in the trains and also at the stations despite charging high rate; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to improve the situation?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS(SHRI R. VELU)

(a) and (b) : Railways endeavour to provide hygienic food to the passengers at stations and in trains at reasonable prices. However some complaints regarding quality, less quantity, over charging have been received. Appropriate action like warning, fine, termination of contract, counseling etc. is taken on complaints found substantiated.

Improvement in catering services as an ongoing process, receives constant attention of the Railways and Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC). IRCTC, a wholly owned company of Indian Railways has been formed to upgrade and professionalize the catering and hospitality services of Indian Railways. IRCTC is setting up multi-cuisine state-of-the-art Food Plazas, Automatic Vending Machines to dispense hot and cold beverages, and modernizing railways' existing base kitchens. Regular monitoring of catering services is done by Railways and IRCTC officials. IRCTC has engaged independent food audit agencies to ensure quality of food being supplied to the passengers of Indian Railways. All good practices like, progressive ISO (International Organization for Standardization) and HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) certification of catering units are being followed. IRCTC has set up control offices at New Delhi, Mumbai, Howrah, Chennai and Secunderabad for receipt and redressal of complaints. Each of these control rooms has personal computers with broadband connectivity and dedicated telephone lines. Any passenger can make a telephone call to any of these control rooms and immediate action is taken on these complaints/suggestions.

In addition to above steps like, Customer Satisfaction Survey conducted through M/s IMRB International, Food Audit done by M/s TUV Sud South Asia on 112 units including Trains, Base Kitchens & Food Plazas, engagement of M/s RITES for ISO 22000:2005 certification of mobile as well as static units, conducting special drives on premium trains including Rajdhani, Shatabdi and other Mail/Express trains through Quality Control Professionals (QCPs) so as to improve quality of catering services, introduction of Colored Menu Cards depicting a-la-Carte items along with their rates etc. have been taken to effect improvement in catering services.